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HISTORY.

EARLY NOTICES OF THE MISSOURI RIVER AND INDIANS.

(THIRD PAPER.)

BY JOHN P. JONES, KEYTESVILLE, MO.

Father James Marquette, who, in company with Joliet of Quebec, explored the Mississippi from the Wisconsin to the Arkansas, in 1673, did not mention the Missouri in his narrative of the voyage except under the name of Pekitanoui, but on his map accompanying the relation, the river is located for a part of its course, and in nearly their right positions the villages of the Missouri Indians are mentioned under the names of Ouchage (Osage), and Emissourites (Missouris).

This map is still preserved with the original relation in St. Mary's College, at Montreal, Canada, and bears, so far as I have been able to discover, the first mention by name of the Missouri Indians. That part of Marquette's map which refers to the country west of the Mississippi must have been based on information derived solely from the Indians, but subsequent investigations have proven its correctness. The first explorers of the Missouri found the tribes, located by Marquette on the course of that river, to be nearly as he placed them, which is as follows: Ouchage (Osage), Emissourites (Missouris), Kansas, Otontanta (Otoes), Maha (Omahas), Pana (Pawnees) and Pahoutet (Pah Ute).

Succeeding Marquette and Joliet, there came to the Illinois country in 1680, to explore the Mississippi Valley, Robert Cavalier, de la Salle, a true rover and ex-

plorer, self-reliant, strong in his own resources, too imperious and dictatorial in his manner to win the confidence of those under his command, but possessed of wonderful energy and a mind charged with grand schemes of western discovery colored with expectations of pecuniary profit to himself and associates. After spending nearly two years in preparing for his voyage, making peace with the Indians, building forts, journeying to Canada and back, La Salle and his party consisting of twenty-three Frenchmen and thirty Indians, left the mouth of the Illinois River December 13th, 1681, and entered the Mississippi. Going down fifteen or twenty miles, they camped for the night within the limits of what is now the State of Missouri. Of this party, who two hundred years ago camped for a wintry night at the junction of the Missouri and Mississippi, three were destined to imperishably connect their names with the history of the valley, La Salle, Father Zenobius Membre, and Henri de Tontz. Of this voyage of La Salle's down the Mississippi there are six narratives, written by members of the expedition, though all of the writers do not mention this camping near the Missouri.

The most explicit account on this point is that of Nicolas de la Salle, whose narrative has lain in manuscript, unpublished, until the recent volumes of Pierre Margry brought it to light. The writer, though of the same name, was not a relative of the commander of the expedition, and at that time was quite a young man. Twenty years later he was made royal commissary of Louisiana, and filled the office for seven years, to the great annoyance of Governor Bienville, with whom he had many contentions. His narrative of the voyage down the Mississippi was written in 1685, and in it he says, "The first day we camped six leagues on the right side, going down the river near the mouth of a river which falls in the Mississippi; it is called the river of the Missouri. This river comes from the northwest and is thickly settled, judging by what the savages say. The Panis (Pawnees) are on this river very far from the mouth."

The location of the camp, as mentioned by this writer, would be within the limits of either St. Louis or St. Charles county, according as it was on the right or left bank of the Missouri. The most prominent member of the expedition next to its commander, was Henri de Tontz, son of the governor of Gaeta, a native of Italy. He entered the French army in 1668 and lost a hand which was supplied by one of iron, from which fact he was frequently called the "iron hand" by the Indians. He joined La Salle at Rochelle in July, 1678, and was among the few men admitted to the confidence of his commander. In his relation of the "Enterprises of M. de la Salle from 1678 to 1683," written at Quebec, November 14, 1684, he recounts the voyage down the Mississippi, and says, "The Indians having finished their canoes we descended the river and found at six leagues on the right a river which falls into the river Colbert, coming from the west and appearing as large and important as the great river. According to the reports of the savages, it is called Emissourites, is abundantly settled with people. There are also on this river villages of savages, which make use of horses to go to war and to carry the meat of the buffalo which they kill." The nation thus referred to was the Pawnees and though they were located far in the

interior they seem to have been early known to the French. The fact that they possessed horses was frequently alluded to by early French annalists. In the account quoted it will be seen that Tontz does not mention that the party camped near the Missouri, but does corroborate M. de la Salle in all other particulars. In the year 1693, nine years after, he addressed a memoir to the King of France, setting forth his services in the valley of the Mississippi, and especially reciting his undertakings in connection with La Salle. In giving an account of the first voyage down the Mississippi, he says, "We descended the river (Illinois) and found six leagues below on the right, a great river which comes from the west, on which there are numerous nations. We slept at its mouth. The next day we went on to the village of the Tamaroas six leagues off on the left." Here it will be seen that Tontz agrees with the young La Salle as to the place of camping on the night of December 13th, though from his language the inference could be drawn that the party spent the night in their canoes, were it not for the positive language of his companion, who says they camped.

La Salle's antipathy to the Jesuits was so great that he would allow none of them to accompany him on his expeditions, but chose his spiritual advisers from the medicant order of Recollects. Two of these friars accompanied him to the Illinois country, Louis Hennepin and Zenobius Membre. The former was sent in February of the preceding year to explore the Mississippi north from the mouth of the Illinois and was taken a prisoner by the Sioux, while the latter accompanied the expedition south from the same place, and has left two accounts of the voyage. In one, which is in the form of a letter dated June 3, 1682, no mention is made of any stop in the vicinity of the Missouri. In the other, which is by far the best account of the voyage in existence, he says, "The floating ice on the river Colbert kept us at this place (the mouth of the Illinois) till the 13th of the same month, when we set out and six leagues lower down found the Osage (Missouri) coming from the west." He makes no mention of stopping, in direct terms, but continues his narrative as follows: "On the 14th, six leagues further we found on the east the village of the Tamaroas who had gone to the chase." The inference to be drawn from this language, is that expressed by Tontz who says of the Missouri, "We slept at its mouth." As the reverend father says they found the river on the 13th and the Tamaroas on the 14th though they were but six leagues apart, he does not intend to convey the idea that the night of the 13th was spent in traveling.

The remaining account of the voyage is found in the *proces verbal* of the taking possession of Louisiana, made by James de la Metairie, at the mouth of the Mississippi, April 9, 1682. Metairie was a notary from Fort Frontenac accompanying the expedition, and while it seems to have been the intention of La Salle to claim possession of the whole territory watered by the Mississippi and its branches, the notary is very obscure in his enumeration of rivers and Indian nations. This defect probably arose from an ignorance of the geography of the country. He does not mention the Missouri River at all, but contents himself with saying that they left the Illinois river on the 13th of December, 1681, and

arrived at the village of the Tamaroas on the 14th. From the extracts given, it is conclusively shown that La Salle and his party spent one night on Missouri soil, on their voyage to the sea, whereby France gained an empire and the world its first knowledge of the mouth and full course of the Mississippi. Conceding that De Soto's expedition reached the New Madrid country in 1542, this visit of La Salle's party in 1681 was the second in point of time made by white men to the country comprised within the borders of our State.

The Missouri and Illinois Indians, though of entirely different stock and living two hundred miles apart, were always on very friendly terms, as I have shown in a former paper. Another incident bearing on this is found in an encounter mentioned by Tontz in his account of the return of La Salle's party up the river. After mentioning that La Salle had been left at Fort Prudhomme sick, and that he had been directed to push on with the main part of the company, and that they had passed the mouth of the Ohio, he says: "Four days after I perceived a smoke and went to it. There came out of the forest thirty Tamaroa warriors with bows bent, making their war cry at us. I presented the calumet to them and one Illinois who was among them having recognized me exclaimed, "It is my comrade, they are French." We landed and passed the night with them. They designed to kill us, but as they were part Illinois, Emissourites and Tamaroa, the Illinois prevented the attack." Here were the Missouris visiting the Tamaroas and uniting with them to go on the war-path. Tontz speaks of the Tamaroas as though they were a distinct tribe, when in reality they were a branch of the Illinois, who had established their village on the banks of the Mississippi. Those familiar with the history of the trials endured by La Salle in his endeavors to establish a colony on the Illinois River will recollect the loss of his vessel, the Griffin, containing the greater part of his stores, and how he suspected that the pilot had purposely wrecked the vessel and taken his goods to the Sioux country intending to establish himself as a trader. From letters written at the time, but only recently published in the Margry volumes, it appears La Salle was of the opinion that his pilot had been captured and held as a prisoner among the Missouris and other tribes west of the Mississippi. In a letter dated Chicago Portage, June 4, 1683, to M. de la Barre, the newly appointed governor of New France, he gives an account of a story told him by an Indian lad, as follows: "The lad had been taken by the Pawnees, then by the Osages, who had given him to the Emissourites, and they to the nation from which I had him. He told us several times that he had seen two Frenchmen, three years ago, prisoners among the Matchinhoa, whom he described to us in such a manner that I could not doubt but one of them was my pilot, that they had been taken in the Mississippi River, which we call Colbert, ascending toward the Sioux, with four others, in birch bark canoes, loaded with merchandise, among which were several large grenades such as I had left in the barque; that the pilot had exploded one in the presence of one of these barbarians, and having made them understand that with similar ones he would burn the villages of their enemies, if they preserved his life. That he did not yet understand the language of those with whom

he was when my little savage saw him. They had come in peace to the village of the Missouris where he then was and exploded a similar grenade." If it were possible to verify this statement of the Indian lad, it would establish the date of the first visit of white men to the Missouris, but unfortunately, though La Salle gives additional circumstances which he supposes relate to the captivity of his pilot, and reiterates the whole story in other letters, the evidence is far from conclusive that his pilot was ever among these Indians, either as a captive or otherwise.

La Salle's aversion to the Jesuits often led him to extremes, and his dislikes of others frequently placed him in an unenviable light.

He was at enmity with Louis Joliet over matters which had occurred at Quebec, relating to the fur trade. Frontenac, La Salle, La Forest, Du Sheet and others, were ranged on one side and Joliet, Bienville and brothers, the intendant Duchesneau and others, on the other. I haven't space to explain the quarrel, but refer to it to show the animus of what follows. Joliet had been associated with Marquette in exploring the Mississippi, and on his map of the country, over which they passed, had made an endorsement approving the route to the Mississippi by way of the Chicago portage to the Illinois river. This approval by Joliet drew the condemnation of La Salle before he passed over the route, and in several of his letters, he took occasion to refer to the impracticability of it. In one recently published by Margry, he says: "The waters being always low in the month of March, it would be easier to effect the transportation from Fort St. Louis, (on the Illinois) to the lakes by land; by making use of horses, which it is easy to have, there being numbers among the savages called Pana, Pancassa, Panimaha and Pasos, at some distance, to be sure, to the westward, but with which an easy communication may be had, either by the river of the Missourites which empties into the river Colbert, if it be not the principal branch of it, and is always navigable for a distance of more than four hundred leagues to the west, or by land, so bare is the country between these people and the river Colbert, that it is a wide prairie by which they may be easily brought overland."

I have quoted this to show to what extremes La Salle was willing to resort rather than approve the route Joliet had endorsed and which eventually became the thoroughfare for that country; also to show that he regarded the horses possessed by the Pawnees as a factor to be used in the future development of the country. The Indians he refers to were all Pawnees, called by different names. He had already received a conditional patent for the vast region in which he was to labor at discovery, and probably regarded the horses possessed by the savages as one of the elements of his future prosperity. The Fort St. Louis referred to was near the village of the Kaskaskia Indians, on the Illinois river and was the place round which he hoped to gather the Indians of the West and South for the purpose of trade. Referring to this, he says in one of the Margry letters: "The arrival of the Ciscas and Chaouenon was followed by the return of the Illinois. The Tamaroas alone number three hundred cabins. Now all these nations come here to settle. The village of Matchinhoa, of three hundred fires, is thirty

leagues from the fort, to which it has also come and a part of the Emissourites and others, which together, form a village of two or three hundred fires. I have established their fields at four leagues from the fort."

Perhaps it is unnecessary for me to say that this scheme proved fruitless, and that the Missouris and other tribes soon returned to their own villages.

M. Bossu, a captain in the French Marines, spent several years in the Mississippi valley, and on his return to France, published at Paris in 1768, his travels in Louisiana, and has the following concerning the Missouris: "Baron Porneuf, who was governor of Fort Orleans, established in that nation, and who knows their genius perfectly well, has informed me that they were formerly very warlike and good, but that the French hunters had corrupted them by their bad conduct. They had made themselves contemptible by frauds in trade, they carried off Indian women and performed other irregularities which irritated the Missouris against them, and therefore, during M. de Bienville's government, they massacred the Sieur Dubois and the little garrison under his command, and as no soldier escaped, we have never been able to know who was right and who was wrong." At another place the author relates a long story, the substance of which is as follows: A trader from the French settlements deceived the Missouris by making them believe that powder would grow in their fields, thereby inducing them to purchase his stock and sow it for the purpose of raising a crop. The Missouris retaliated for this deceit by taking the goods of the next trader that visited them, without giving any furs in exchange. A subsequent trader turned the whole transaction to his own profit by bringing with him a keg of powdered charcoal and after inducing the chiefs to enter his hut for the purpose of trade, pretended to become crazy, and threatened to discharge his pistols into the keg of charcoal, which the Indians supposed to be powder, if the friends of the chiefs in the hut with him, did not bring beaver enough to pay for all the goods taken from the other trader. The Missouris supposing their chiefs to be in imminent danger, complied with the demand and brought in piles of beaver skins, when the crafty trader announced that he had recovered his senses. He then poured water on the charcoal to prevent a recurrence of the danger to his friends in case his senses left him again. By such schemes were the Indians defrauded by the French, who came among them for the purpose of trade.

The same author gives an instance of what he terms jugglery by one of the Missouris, as follows: "I will give you another account of the superstition of these people, and of the divine service they give to horrid animals. In 1756 there arrived a deputation of Indians at Fort Chartres, of the nation of Missouris. There was an old woman among them who passed for a magician. She wore around her naked body a living rattlesnake, whose bite is mortal if the remedy is not applied the moment after. This priestess of the devil spoke to the serpent, which seemed to understand what she said, 'I see,' said she, 'thou art weary of staying here, go then, return home, I shall find thee at my return.' The reptile immediately ran into the woods and took the road to the Missouris.

"If I had been inclined to be superstitious, I should have told you that I had seen the devil appear to these nations under the figure of a snake. Many missionaries have been willing to persuade us in their relations, that the devil appears to these people in order to be adored by them; but it is easy to see that there is nothing preternatural in it, the snake of the pretended witch did not go to her country, it was a mere juggle." Of the natural history of the country, the author remarks: "In the country of the Missouris there are magpies, only different from the European ones by their plumage, their black and white colors being shaded. The Indians make ornaments for their hair of them. On going towards the head of the river of the Missouris, you find all sorts of wild beasts. The wild goats and their young ones are very common at certain seasons. These animals are very lively and pretty. The French that have eaten of them assure me that the young venison is as good as the best mutton."

ARCHÆOLOGY.

WHO WERE THE MOUND-BUILDERS ?

BY J. F. SNYDER, M. D.

"The conviction is daily gaining strength that the race of Indians found in occupancy of this country when it was discovered by the Europeans were the people, or the immediate descendants of the people, who built the mounds; and students of American Archæology now agree that mound-building was practiced by some of the tribes down to a comparatively recent date."

This opinion I recently expressed in a paper, published in the *Missouri Republican*, on "the death and resurrection of Black Hawk," and it embodies two propositions which I maintain to be true. It was quoted in the January number of the REVIEW with the following dissenting comment: "We doubt whether Professor Putnam, or any other first-class authority, will endorse this statement without considerable qualification."

In this criticism I am left in uncertainty as to the exact nature and amount of "qualification" the REVIEW regards as "considerable" or essential for the endorsement of my statement by first-class authorities; and also, as to precisely who, in the editor's estimation, besides the eminent gentleman named, constitute authorities of the first-class. Nevertheless, I will reiterate and specify, without fear of successful contradiction, that the conclusions to which I have arrived, as above quoted, are accepted with very slight, if any, qualifications, by such authorities as Professor Putnam and Lucien Carr, of the Peabody Museum of Ethnology; E. G. Squier, author of "Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley, Etc."; Prof. Charles Rau, Curator of the Smithsonian Ethnological Department;

Col. C. C. Jones, Jr., author of "Antiquities of the Southern Indians, Etc."; Prof. Lewis H. Morgan, author of "Ancient Society, Etc."; Prof. N. H. Winchell; Prof. Joseph Jones, author of "Aboriginal Remains of Tennessee;" Dr. John J. R. Patrick, John P. Jones, Esq., and a host of other cultured students all over the country, who have expended years in diligent research and laborious investigation of American antiquities.

But we cannot rely upon mere opinions, however dogmatically asserted, in matters of natural science, to influence the convictions of thinking men. It is only reasonable that, in the issue joined, some of the deductions and facts upon which the views I have advanced are based, should be demanded and fairly considered. The proper presentation of all the evidence and a thorough discussion of the data forming that basis would require the space of a large volume and can only be epitomized in the limits allotted to this paper.

Though a mound of earth was erected on the battle-field of Waterloo, by order of the English government, only sixty-seven years ago, it is not seriously maintained by any one that the construction of an earthen mound necessarily requires a high degree of engineering skill or mathematical talent, or is in any view the achievement of special genius. On the contrary, earthen mounds are the product of only muscular effort, and were made by primitive people because they were the form of tumuli requiring the exercise of the least skill; the simplest and most easily constructed as well as the most enduring. Mound building, for the inhumation of the dead and in veneration of their memory, and for other rites of a sacred character, and in commemoration of important events, has been practiced, not exclusively by any one branch of the human family, nor only in any one era of the world's history, but alike by savage, barbarian and semi-civilized races, in all quarters of the globe, from the earliest to modern times. The early New Zealanders, the Celts, Gauls, Japanese, Scythians, Scandinavians, etc., heaped mounds over the bodies of their distinguished dead, and the ancient Greeks also erected mounds over the remains of their heroes slain in battle.

The mounds of the Mississippi basin are in no essential particular different from those seen on the plains of Europe or the steppes of Asia; and surely none of them, in conception or execution, are above the capacity of the Indians who entertained and fought De Soto, and whose descendants were subsequently studied by Adair, Bartram, Du Pratz and Charlevoix. The internal evidence of the mounds in this country, and the obvious uses of the numerous implements and ornaments of stone, shell, bone, etc., manufactured by their builders, and often found buried with their remains, imply that the mound-builder's methods of life, arts of subsistence, customs, habits, and mental characteristics were precisely identical with those of the Florida Indians at the date of their primal contact with Europeans; and were the natural resultants of the necessities, passions and superstitions of a people occupying at best a middle plane of barbarism. In all the pre-historic remains of the Mississippi Valley not the slightest proof has been found to sustain the theory that it was at any time occupied by a race superior to the Mandans, Choctaws and Natchez; and there is not a sound reason for attributing the author-

ship of those remains to a distinct and now extinct people, when we know that those Indians were in possession of all of the arts, practices and superstitions claimed for that imaginary race. The builders of the mounds knew nothing of astronomy, mathematics or architecture. They had no knowledge of metals, having never even discovered the reduction of galena, the most readily fused of all ores. They lived in temporary huts of frail, perishable materials, and had not advanced to the art of constructing stationary abodes of clay or stone. Their wants had developed mechanical skill of no mean order, as is manifested by their coarse fabrics, woven of hemp and bark, their pottery, stone weapons, domestic implements, ornaments, etc. They had progressed in the arts of food production beyond reliance upon roots, mollusks and fruits to a rudimentary cultivation of the earth and the storing of provisions for future use. They made toys for the amusement of their children, and devices for playing games; but the chief pastime of the males, judging from the quantity and quality of the weapons and defences they left, was war and the chase. They believed in a future state of existence; buried their dead with tender care, and burned their captives without mercy. There is not the slightest foundation for the belief so frequently expressed, that they lived in an organized "Empire," or under any other form of political government; or that they possessed any description of written language or system of hieroglyphics; or had any formulated mode of worship; or entertained religious sentiments more elevated than the grossest superstitions.

This summary sketch accurately depicts the status of the mound-builders, and is a correct representation of the condition of the southern Indians when first discovered.

Comparative craniology has been invoked, by eminent ethnologists, to support the theory of a pre-existent race superior to the Indians, with results by no means satisfactory. The mean cranial capacity of one people may be less or greater than that of another; but, so far no appreciable difference in mean internal capacity has been discovered between the crania of some of the Indians who built mounds and some who did not; and attempts to establish racial distinctions upon the shape of the skull by classing the one *Brachycephalic* (round skulls), and the other, *Dolicocephalic* (long skulls), is unscientific, arbitrary and not sustained by observed facts. Dr. Richard Owen remarked: "From an old and well-filled European grave yard may be selected specimens of *Klimocephalic*, *Conocephalic*, *Brachycephalic*, *Dolicocephalic*, *Platycephalic*, *Leptocephalic* and other forms of crania equally worthy of penta or hexa-syllabic Greek epithets." This is true also of any large collection of crania of any race; and in a given number of skulls of ancient (mound-builder) and modern Indians, excepting such as have been artificially deformed, all the above types will probably be found. For it cannot be seriously contended that the heads of any people have all been for centuries cast in the same mould.

In the statement that mound-building had been practiced by some of the tribes down to a comparatively recent date it may be necessary to explain that the primal contact of the whites with the Indians of this continent; or, in other

words, the beginning of America's history, is accepted as "recent" compared to the vast antiquity claimed for the rise, grandeur and final extinction of the mound-builder's "Vanished Empire." With this "qualification" I will briefly cite, in corroboration of my statement, a few well-authenticated instances of comparatively recent mounds, or such as are known to have been erected subsequent to the intrusion of civilization and its arts.

Mr. Squier, in the second volume of "Contributions to Knowledge," of the Smithsonian Institution, describes mounds and earthworks extending from Canada to the Susquehanna, which were found to contain ornamented pottery, pipes, stone axes, hammers and discs and other stone-age implements identical in shape and material with similar specimens found by him in the Ohio mounds; and bone awls and needles together with iron axes, glass beads, cast copper hatchets, kettles of iron, brass and copper, and other articles of European manufacture. The building of these mounds he was forced to assign to the Iroquois within "comparatively recent dates;" though in every essential character they were exactly like the older mounds in central Ohio. In this (Cass) county, a few years ago, a mound, eight feet high by twenty-five feet in diameter, situated on a point of the Sangamon bluffs, was opened and found to contain the remains of one human skeleton walled around with rough stones, over which the earth had been heaped. With this skeleton were found a small earthenware cup, a few flint implements and an iron gun barrel. In another low mound six miles from this city, removed some years ago in opening a new road, the remains of several individuals were thrown out, together with stone axes, flint arrow-points, broken pottery, glass beads and brass rings. In the skeleton hand of one of the dead was a beautiful pipe, of polished serpentine, cut in the exact image of a frog. Col. C. C. Jones, Jr., found in a mound, not far from Savannah, with the bones of a skeleton at its base, an earthen pot, a few arrow-heads of flint, a stone celt, and the oak handle, with part of the blade of an old-fashioned sword. Bartram, as late as 1729, saw the Choctaws take from their tribal bone-house a large number of the remains of their dead in rude coffins, and after piling them up in a pyramid, heap over them a great mound of earth. Dr. Sternberg, of the U. S. Army, in a paper read in 1875, before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, describes his explorations of certain mounds near Pensacola, Florida, in which were found pottery, hematite paint rocks, flint weapons, perforated shell ornaments, blue-glass beads and pieces of iron. The old Winnebago chief, Win-neshiek, said the mounds at Lanesboro, Minnesota, were erected by the Sioux, many generations before, in commemoration of a great victory the latter had achieved over his people. Tomochichi pointed out to Gov. Oglethorpe a large mound near Savannah, Georgia, which he said had been raised over the remains of the Yamicraw Chief who had, many years before, entertained a red-bearded white man, who had sailed up the Savannah River, in a large vessel, to the Yamicraw Bluffs.

The Natchez Indians when expelled from Louisiana, by the French, in 1728, retired to the neighborhood of Natchitoches and there built a mound of consider-

able size. Featherstonhaugh states that the Osages erected a mound over the corpse of one of their chiefs, called by the French, Jean Defoe, "enlarging it at intervals for a long period until it reached its present height." Catlin states that the Mandans erected mounds over their dead; and he gives the following account of the burial of Black Bird, a noted chief of the Omahas, about the year 1800, on the top of the Missouri bluffs, sixty miles from the present city of Omaha: "The O-ma-haw village was about sixty miles above this place; and this very noted chief, who had been on a visit to Washington City, in company with the Indian agent, died of the small-pox, near this spot on his return home; and, whilst dying, enjoined on his warriors who were about him, this singular request, which was literally complied with. He requested them to take his body down the river to this, his favorite haunt, and on the pinnacle of this towering bluff, to bury him on the back of his favorite war-horse, which was to be buried alive under him, from whence he could see, as he said, 'the Frenchmen passing up and down the river in their boats.' He owned, amongst many horses, a noble white steed that was led to the top of the grass-covered hill, and with great pomp and ceremony, in presence of the whole nation and several of the fur-traders and the Indian agent, he was placed astride of his horse's back, with his bow in his hand, and his shield and quiver slung—with his pipe and his medicine bag—with his supply of dried meat, and his tobacco-pouch replenished to last him through his journey to the 'beautiful hunting-grounds of the shades of his fathers'—with his flint and steel, and his tinder, to light his pipe by the way. The scalps that he had taken from his enemies' heads could be trophies for nobody else, and were hung to the bridle of his horse; he was in full dress and fully equipped, and on his head waved, to the last moment, his beautiful head-dress of war-eagles' plumes. In this plight, and the last funeral honors having been performed by the 'medicine-men,' every warrior of his band painted the palm and fingers of his right hand with vermillion, which was stamped, and perfectly impressed on the milk-white sides of his devoted horse. This all done, turfs were brought and placed around the feet and legs of the horse, and gradually laid up to his sides, and at last over the back and head of the unsuspecting animal; and last of all, over the head and even the eagle plumes of its valiant rider, where altogether have smouldered and remained undisturbed to the present day (1836). This mound, which is covered with green turf and spotted with wild flowers, with its cedar post in its center, can easily be seen at the distance of fifteen miles, by the *voyageur*, and forms for him a familiar and useful land-mark. Whilst visiting this mound in company with Major Sanford, on our way up the river, I discovered in a hole made in the mound, by a 'ground-hog' or some other animal, the skull of the horse; and by a little pains also came at the skull of the chief, which I carried to the river-side and secreted till my return in my canoe, when I took it in, and brought it with me to this place, where I now have it." I have quoted this interesting account at length because it fully authenticates the building of a sepulchral mound, by nomadic savages, so late as the beginning of the present century; and also because, the horse excepted, it no doubt

graphically pictures the process of mound-inhumation practiced by their ancestors from time immemorial.

The one characteristic which, it is claimed, distinguishes the mortuary customs of the mound-builders from those of the nomadic Indians is the fact that the former never buried their dead beneath the surface of the ground, but invariably placed the remains of their deceased on the ground, or in very shallow excavations and heaped the earth over them; while the latter disposed of their deceased kinsmen by placing the dead bodies either on scaffolds, in graves beneath the earth's surface, or consumed them by burning. If this distinction is admitted, we cannot fail to recognize in the burial of Black Hawk, the great Sauk chief, in 1838, a vestige of the ancient custom of his ancestors, modified by the acquisition of European ideas and arts. The old chief when dead was arrayed in full dress, wrapped in fine new blankets, with all of his trophies, ornaments and sword at his sides; then laid on a plank and placed on the surface of the ground, with his feet in a shallow excavation about a foot in depth and his head raised a foot or more above the surface. A forked post was planted at his head and another at his feet, across which was placed a ridge pole supporting split boards, or "puncheons," leaning from the ground on either side of the corpse. The gable ends of this roof-like coffin were closed with rough boards, and the whole covered with earth and sod, forming a mound about four feet high. In this instance is presented all the elements of mound burial, only wanting the tribute of a small quantity of earth from each member of the tribe in passing by, or at their annual convocations, to make it, in course of time, a tumulus similar to the most ancient in our country. The disposition of the corpse in the large mound on the Scioto, six miles below Chillicothe, described on page 162 of "*Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley*;" and of the remains at the base of the large mound at East St. Louis, removed in 1870 to make way for a railroad track; only differ from the inhumation of Black Hawk in having been enclosed with crib-work of cedar logs instead of the ridge-pole and split boards. There is also another suggestion offered by the grave of Black Hawk which may, not inappropriately, be mentioned here. It was surrounded, to guard it from the intrusion of men and animals, with strong pickets twelve feet high, planted in the ground, with earth thrown up against them to impart additional stability, in the manner that all Indians built stockades for military defense. Had this grave remained unmolested until the wooden pickets had disappeared by decay, the small mound covering the old chief would have appeared enclosed by an earthen ring, as was the case with the great mound at Marietta, and others of that class. In this may we not trace the origin and purpose of the mysterious ring embankments encircling some of the ancient mounds?

"During the progress of this investigation," remarks Col. C. C. Jones, in summing up the result of his researches among the antiquities of the Southern Indians, "it will be perceived that mound building, which seems to have fallen into disuse prior to the dawn of the historic period, was entirely abandoned very shortly after intercourse was established between Europeans and red men. *

* * In a word, we do not concur in the opinion, so often expressed, that the mound-builders were a race distinct from and superior in art, government, and religion, to the Southern Indians of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries." In a very able paper on the "Ancient Copper Mines of Isle Royale," by Prof. N. H. Winchell, in the *Popular Science Monthly* of last September, he forcibly says: "If we inquire further what relation the mound-builders bore to the Aborigines found here by Columbus, we shall be compelled to admit, from the evidence, that the Aborigines themselves were the mound-builders and ancient miners. * * * It is poor philosophy and poor science that resorts to hypothetical causes when those already known are sufficient to produce the known effect. The Indian is a known adequate cause. The assignment of the mounds to any other dynasty was born of that common reverence for the past and for the unexplainable, which not only unconsciously augments the actual, but revolts at the reduction of their works to the level of the red man."

To this sentiment of veneration for the past and common tendency to exaggerate the marvelous we owe the entire fabric of an imaginary semi-civilized race and mythical empire, gorgeous in semi-barbaric splendor and fascinating in wild interest as an oriental tale. It has, however, had its day and is rapidly fading away before the iconoclasm of research and common sense.

VIRGINIA, CASS CO., ILL., January 23, 1882.

THE MOUND-BUILDERS AND THE AZTECS.

Writing to the *Chicago Times* from New Mexico, Mr. S. B. Evans states that on the highest point of the great Potrero de las Vacas are some of the most remarkable prehistoric relics that have been discovered in New Mexico, being no less than the gods sculptured in stone that were worshiped by the ancients. These are statues of mountain lions, carved from a volcanic rock *in situ* that forms the cap of the potrero. The images are inclosed in a rude and almost circular stone wall, in a space fifty feet in circumference, three feet in height, with an entrance projected eighteen feet toward the southeast, three feet wide. The lions face directly toward the east, are two in number, separated by a space of twelve inches, and are each six feet in length, and represent a puma or mountain lion in the act of crouching for a spring. The heads of these statues are almost entirely destroyed, showing plainly the marks of the pious hammer that sought their overthrow. The legs, body, and tails of the animals are better preserved, and constitute the remains of the most remarkable stone images set up for pagan worship in the territory of the United States. To these gods the Cochiti Indians of the present day pay homage.

In the courtyard of the national museum in Mexico are carved images, in stone, of similar animals. Some of them are well preserved, while others bear the marks of Spanish defacement. The mountain lion was a sacred animal among

the Mexicans, as well as with the ancient and present dwellers in the mountains of Cochiti.

Opposite to and north of the potrero of the lions, in the face of a cliff and fronting a deep cañon, is a series of cliff dwellings, hewn out of the rock, in which centuries ago men made their habitations, lived, and died. All the cliff buildings which Mr. Evans has examined, face toward the south. This may be accidental. They all conform to a general style of construction. This is the result of purpose. They are superior in workmanship to the cave dwellings of Europe, and inferior to the efforts of the town-builders of New Mexico and Arizona. They are not the work of nomads, who do not stop long enough, nor do they have the disposition to hew out for themselves habitations in the rocks, but may be identified with the people who emigrated from the seven cave cities of Aztlan and found refuge in Mexico, one thousand years ago.

The antiquities of New Mexico, Colorado, and Arizona are distinct from those of any other portion of the United States, and the forms peculiar to the two last named are found in New Mexico. The object of the explorations which Mr. Evans is making, was primarily and prominently to throw light on the origin of the mysterious mound-builders, and to find, if it exists, the analogy between their works and those of the pyramid-builders in the valley of Mexico. If that analogy were established it was believed that one important step would be gained in the solution of the problem.

Beginning in Minnesota, he has by personal survey traced the mound-builders to the Gulf, and found an unbroken chain of their curious works down the valley of the Mississippi, into colonies on the principal tributaries traversing the States that border on the great stream. Mounds were found along the entire route and on the shores of the Gulf. Crossing into Mexico, the chain dropped in the sea at Galveston, was recovered near Vera Cruz. On the plain of Cholula is a mound, that, if transferred to Cahokia, would fit the landscape, and appear in keeping with the general plan of the works. On the other hand, if the great mound of Cahokia were brought in presence of Popocatepetl, it would not be abashed, but be a fit companion for the pyramid. The pyramids of the sun and moon at Teotihuacan would be mounds in Virginia and Ohio, and the great mounds of Grove Creek and Seltzertown might embellish the ancient "City of the Gods." Excavations were made in Mexican mounds as they were made in the United States, and, substantially, the results were the same—tombs in some mounds, altars in others, and nothing in a few. Pottery was found with the lines of ornamentation the same as that discovered in Arkansas; heads of idols, the counterpart of those found in Tennessee; children's toys from each, that might have been produced from the same mould, and skulls from the tombs of San Juan with the same peculiar flattening of the occipital region that distinguishes the skulls of the mound-builders wherever they are found in the United States. The presence of an intrusive race was early detected, and the comment made that it was impossible for the Aztecs to have been the builders of the pyramids or any of the works of antiquity in that region. This, Mr. Evans